

To the Edge of the Urban Landscape: Homelessness and the Politics of Care

Political Theory

2018, Vol. 46(4) 586–610

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DOI: 10.1177/0090591716682290

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Abstract

Homelessness is an obvious moral challenge, given the fact that it is a problem that millions of people in the developed world have to deal with on a daily basis. In the relatively scarce literature on this subject, there appear to be—roughly—three main approaches, namely, what I will refer to as the “difference approach,” the “liberal approach” and the “care approach.” In the paper I will critically review these three moral perspectives on the issue of homelessness. I will argue that the difference approach and the liberal approach in the end are unconvincing. Homelessness can hardly be interpreted in terms of an internally valued group identity nor in terms of autonomy and its preconditions. I will defend a version of the care approach instead, an approach that focuses on the concrete and particular needs of the homeless.

Keywords

homelessness, homeless, politics of difference, liberalism, care ethics

Both the rich and the poor have the freedom to sleep on the streets at night, but the rich fail to take advantage of this freedom. This jest conveys an obvious but painful message: the privileged simply do not *have to* live and sleep

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on the streets. Homelessness is a problem that millions of people in the developed world have to deal with on a daily basis.¹ I will specifically reflect on the problem of homelessness as it occurs in the major cities of the relatively rich welfare states of the West. This focus brings out a certain contradiction that, I think, is quite puzzling: why do the richest countries in the world have millions of people living far below its own basic standards of minimum welfare? Moreover, how is it possible that our liberal-democratic states contain citizens that live without the defining characteristic of liberalism itself, namely, a private sphere?

One answer to these questions is that most citizens have become so used to the sight of the homeless in the centers of our cities that they simply have become invisible or are just perceived as part of the normal city-scape.² Another possible answer is that most urbanites live in the suburbs anyway, where they are not confronted with the evidence of homelessness on a day-to-day basis.³ These answers, of course, are not satisfactory from the moral point of view. But what *is* the moral point of view regarding homelessness?

In the relatively scarce literature on this subject, there appear to be—roughly—three main approaches, namely, what I will refer to as the “difference approach,” the “liberal approach” and the “care approach.” In the essay I will critically review these three moral perspectives on the issue of homelessness and I will argue that the difference approach and the liberal approach in the end are unconvincing and hence unhelpful. Both a politics of pluralism (§ 1) and of liberal respect (§ 2) seem not to confront the central moral challenges of homelessness. In most cases homelessness is neither an internally valued group identity nor an authentic choice, but instead a tragic condition that is the result of different causes, both structural (e.g., political-economical) and individual (e.g., addiction, mental illness, unemployment, traumatic life histories). For that reason I will defend a version of the care approach, an approach that focuses on the concrete and particular needs of the homeless (§ 3). According to some, however, practices of care and reintegration run the risk of a degrading construal of the homeless as “helpless victims” or “clients with pathologies”⁴ at the mercy of a panoptic regime of normalization and objectification.⁵ These worries need to be addressed (§ 4).

1. The Difference Approach to Homelessness

The difference approach to homelessness argues for a more diverse conception of public space, particularly in terms of a more accommodating system of laws and policies of what is allowed on the city streets. These theorists basically argue that the homeless have increasingly become victims of homogenizing conceptions of public space.⁶ Increasingly, the public places

of the urban landscape are becoming inhospitable to a human life form that is considered to be inappropriate and disturbing. Practices like sleeping in public, urinating in public parks or alleys and panhandling are increasingly banned by local governments. Hence they argue for an acceptance of these practices and criticize an increasingly hostile political and juridical system in many urban centers, that bans all or some of these activities by means of a whole range of anti-homeless policies, such as panhandling and urban camping ordinances, criminalizing public sleeping, eviction of shelters from gentrifying neighborhoods and street sweeps that confiscate the property of homeless persons.

The homeless have a "right to 'live' in public spaces, a right that outweighs the interests others have in not being physically or morally offended."⁷ So what, for instance, should be allowed in the name of a more inclusive conception of citizenship are homeless encampments⁸ and tent cities.⁹ We should in this regard cultivate a cosmopolitan "openness to the Other" instead of "demands for assimilation": "the Other should be allowed to exist as Other," and so we need a politics of "acceptance of heterogeneity."¹⁰ Very unhappy parallels are sometimes drawn with immigrants and refugees. All these categories more or less collapse into the central concept of "the Other" who is on the receiving end of "prerogative power" that is "punitive and disciplinary."¹¹ Some pluralists like Smith even argue that the moral point is to "accept [homelessness] as a viable lifestyle" and that we "should seek to help the homeless to thrive while homeless."¹² Smith defends homelessness against prevailing socio-economic norms, such as the work ethic and family life. Homeless people "are particularly well situated to discover new pathways to spiritual progress," they embody "the advantages of living more simply" and a "life advancing strength."¹³

Albeit these theorists sometimes use the vocabulary of a politics of recognition or difference, amongst others by criticizing attempts to "assimilate" the "other" to a standard of normalcy, the moral logic of a recognition of ethnocultural difference is very different. That kind of recognition crucially relies on the fact that the relevant difference consists of a valued set of practices or traditions, that is, valued from the *internal* point of view by the minority group involved. What is key to the moral logic of that kind of recognition is that the groups who are recognized positively identify with these practices or traditions, that is, with their "difference."¹⁴

The problem with a difference approach is that it tries to accommodate a mode of existence that typically fails to satisfy basic notions of human dignity and basic need fulfillment. That is why it offends against our moral intuitions to suggest that most homeless people positively identify with their homeless status and all the activities that they have to perform in public like

urinating, panhandling, eating and sleeping. To be homeless is to be caught in public, even for the most intimate functions and activities, as well as being exposed to the elements. And although most cities have shelter systems in place, many homeless avoid them (except in extreme circumstances) because they are heavily regulated and offer no (or insufficient) privacy. Moreover, homeless people are worried about their safety and health in shelters.¹⁵

Part of their misery can be attributed to the fact that they are seen as violating social norms and offending public sensibilities: they tend to suffer from stigma.¹⁶ Although the homeless are trapped in public, at the same time they are not considered to be *part of* the public. Besides their outcast status, the homeless are effectively noncitizens in the sense in which they are unable to meaningfully participate in any civic or social function. In that sense, the homeless person is not only without a private sphere but effectively also without a public sphere. Various forms of harassment and violence are an effect of that nonacceptance.

But even if they were “accepted,” as the difference approach argues for, and violence and stigma were brought to an end, there are other grave costs to being homeless. More than one-third of the homeless are in poor health and their mortality rates are three to four times greater than those of the population at large.¹⁷ Alcohol and drug abuse is very frequent, partly as a consequence of their destitute situation.¹⁸ Among street youth there is a high rate of unplanned pregnancy and HIV infection¹⁹ and they are more likely to be socially isolated²⁰ and to attempt suicide.²¹

Even if one tries to re-describe a recognition of difference in a moral language that seems more fitting, namely, tolerance, the same problem reappears. The difference between recognizing difference and tolerating it is that the acceptance of the relevant social difference is accompanied by an objection to it. Key to the general concept of tolerance is a simultaneous objection and acceptance, where the acceptance component in the end trumps the objection component in the relevant context.²² However, part of this logic is also that the party that performs tolerated acts or practices values these practices. The idea of toleration does not make much moral sense if the tolerated practice, despite objections to it by the tolerating (often more powerful) party, is objected to *as well* by the party that is tolerated with respect to this practice.

In short, what is fundamentally problematic about the difference approach is that one recognizes social diversity (or that one tolerates it), but that the social difference in case is generally not valued by the party that is supposed to be the beneficiary of this type of recognition. Voluntary homeless, however, cannot be ruled out altogether. There is a lure of the open road that some people find appealing, at least during certain stages of their life. An example

are the so called New Age Travelers, groups of young people who travelled around the United Kingdom in caravans or occupied and squatted abandoned buildings.²³ And some homeless define their hostel room or set of relationships within the homeless or traveling community as “home.”²⁴ For these so called “homeless at heart,” who find it difficult to feel part of and function in mainstream society and for whom life on the margins has a special allure,²⁵ we might adopt an attitude of tolerance and accommodation. For this group—small in reality as it may be—in principle society should allow “disrespectful lodging” and “substandard resources” within the limits of mutual respect and the risk of serious self-harm.²⁶ However, it is both morally and empirically unsupportable that voluntary homelessness is a widespread phenomenon, or that it comes even remotely close to being representative of a majority of homeless cases. As we have said, basic interests like shelter for the elements, safety, privacy, health and food are substantially jeopardized. As Gaetz and others put it, “Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing.”²⁷

So we are left with a horrible condition, not just for consumers, capital, or the powers that be, but also and more severely for the people that are forced to live on the streets of our cities. What are the alternatives? Perhaps we should look at the central political outlook of modern Western states: liberalism and respect for autonomy and agency.

2. The Liberal Approach to Homelessness

There are roughly two versions of the liberal approach to homelessness, namely, a minimalist version (§ 2.1) and what I think is appropriate to refer to as a generous version (§ 2.2). Neither of these variants, however, is morally convincing, although the latter comes much closer to this.

2.1. *The Minimalist Variant of the Liberal Approach*

Jeremy Waldron represents the minimalist liberal approach to the scandal of first world homelessness, and a fairly influential one.²⁸ Waldron argues that liberalism well understood would reject an interpretation of private property or common property that would make the exercise of certain basic freedoms that are tied to certain basic needs—such as sleeping, finding food, urinating—effectively impossible. Freedom means that everyone is allowed to exercise such freedoms, including homeless persons, and that implies having a space to do that.

Now although Waldron stresses that the exercise of freedoms one way or another involves space, and that a conception of property that limits such

space for a certain group of people is illegitimate, he is not thinking of a private home for the homeless. He argues that we need a conception of *public* space that is not at odds with such spaces to exercise these basic needs.

Hence there are no serious proposals to house the homeless, to provide them with what they need most, namely, a place where they can feel at home and that provides a sense of safety and privacy as well as protection from the cold and from danger. Waldron puts it as follows:

Now one question we face as a society—a broad question of justice and social policy—is whether we are willing to tolerate an economic system in which large numbers of people are homeless. Since the answer is evidently “Yes,” the question that remains is whether we are willing to allow those who are in this predicament to act as free agents, looking after their own needs, in public spaces—the only space available to them.²⁹

Waldron argues that we ought to answer “Yes” to the second question as well. This position could be construed as a type of non-ideal theory that argues against an increasingly hostile political and juridical system for the homeless in many urban centers that makes it effectively impossible for them to engage in life-sustaining activities.³⁰ That is why he refers to his argument as a case of “negative freedom.”³¹

Now if the homeless had to choose between Waldron’s version of liberal freedom and the current reality of being chased from one city to the next, the choice would be straightforward. In that sense, Waldron argues for a more accommodating public space for the homeless, “who must live their whole lives on common land.”³² Yet I believe that this position is not ambitious enough and, furthermore, is based on a false opposition. The options we are presented with here are the following.

The first option is to accept this economic system and the prosperity that it has brought for most of “us,” but take as a given the fact that there is some unavoidable collateral damage in the form of those who, for some reason, cannot keep up, and fall through the cracks of the system. For them, we should firmly reject the punitive approach given that people simply need some space to perform essential “activities” like “urinating, washing, sleeping, cooking, eating, and standing around.”³³ Furthermore, we can make life better by a “generous provision of public lavatories,” which would already make “an immense difference.”³⁴

These are stop-gap measures of course, not substantive solutions. Even though the homeless are an uncomfortable “reminder of the human price that is paid for a social structure”³⁵ like the one we live in, we should apparently grow up and get used to the sight of the homeless. And if it can be a comfort,

Waldron has not stopped respecting the homeless as “agents”: “Perhaps the strongest argument for thinking about the homeless as an issue of freedom is that it forces us to see people in need as *agents*.”³⁶ At least they have the freedom now to urinate and sleep in public.

The second option is not really explored, although some references to “communism” suggest that this politico-economic system might be better for the homeless, but cannot be considered to be a real alternative.³⁷ The false opposition that Waldron works with here—either we accept the homeless and protect their negative freedom to perform essential human activities or we reject the liberal-democratic state based on a free market—is a premise he shares with Marxist theorists like Peter Marcuse and others who argue in favor of the opposite horn of the false dilemma: “a large-scale, collective, mobilized effort to transform the social, economic, and ideological underpinnings of the current systemic conditions.”³⁸

The problem of homelessness in liberal welfare states calls for neither a complete political and economical transformation nor a laissez-faire liberal approach that is accompanied by the cold consolation of at least being taken seriously as “agents.” I fail to see why this type of recognition is so crucial that it gets in the way of more significant types of help and care, which we will discuss in the next section. What the stress on agency seems to miss is the fact that most homeless persons are on the streets not because they want to be, because this is part of some plan of life that we liberals have to “respect.” Respecting people is categorical and not conditional, but sometimes for those in dire need, for those that are sleeping rough, without a home and sufficient food and shelter we have to consider if other types of recognition should not be considered *in addition* to respect. But before we do that, let us see if liberal autonomy can be interpreted in another, more generous, way in relation to the fate of the homeless.

2.2. *The Generous Variant of the Liberal Approach*

Some theorists like Schrader argue that our homes “constitute for each of us a unique domain of personal autonomy.”³⁹ Having a home implies the right to exclude those who are not part of the household. This realm of protection has even been extended by law to the legal tenant.⁴⁰ Unless there are special circumstances that permit government agencies to enter with special warrants, no person beyond the small circle of immediate family is entitled to enter our home without our permission. In that sense our home is a bastion of autonomy and to lack a home, it can be argued, is a fundamental violation of basic liberal respect.

This argument can be enriched by adding the dimension of privacy. Karin-Frank argues that privacy is needed for the development of an intact sense of self, for the cultivation of a sense of identity and intimacy.⁴¹ A home can be seen as the physical component for achieving a state of privacy. A home provides a space where primary relationships can develop and flourish. In addition, privacy means that one is able to withdraw from the demands and stresses of public life and the public roles that we play, that we can temporarily be “off stage.”⁴²

This more generous interpretation of liberalism leads to a very different conclusion than Waldron’s version; homeless people have a right to a home and that is what should be underscored instead of the right to dwell in public. Although there is much to be said for this more demanding liberal approach to homelessness, and although in some ways it overlaps with the care approach that I will defend later, there are two shortcomings to it that, I think, undermine its initial normative force.

A first reservation I have is that homeless people in many cases need more than simply the right to be left alone, which the right to exclude and the right to privacy basically boil down to. Citizens who have become homeless often have specific needs that are related to the fact that they have become homeless in the first place—substance abuse, mental health problems, trauma, to name a few—that have to be addressed. In addition to that, transitions out of homelessness often require a myriad of support concerning things like living and household skills, finance/income and positive social networks. A home surely is an important condition for that, but unfortunately in many cases it is not enough.⁴³

Second, because liberalism essentially entails an anticipation of individual freedom and accountability, the question whether people have become homeless as a result of their own irresponsible actions is either lurking in the background or it is an explicit part of the moral outlook. Although accountability is an important moral principle, it should not be conceived of as the pole star of moral reason. Homeless people in that case tend to appear as if their condition is either a free choice, a “life style,” or the consequence of reckless behavior for which they have to bear the costs themselves. Why should we provide them with homes, welfare provisions and care if their plight is the consequence of a series of free acts? Some US courts have even argued on this basis that the prohibition of sleeping or camping in public is entirely justified as well as the confiscation of possessions of homeless persons that are left in public places.⁴⁴

For these reasons, the stress on liberal autonomy might not do the work that the generous interpretation of liberalism is after. This raises the question whether an ethics of care could offer an alternative moral vision. An

ethics of care is focused not so much on “group difference” or “agency” but rather on providing the individualized care and help either to develop the needed independence and competences to function as an “agent” or to re-constitute those competences and abilities (that for some tragic reason have been lost) as well as possible. The difference approach, focusing on recognizing “social difference,” as well as the liberal approach that focuses on “agency” or the “right to exclude,” simply seem out of touch with the dire needs of the homeless. Before we focus on social difference or agency, we should focus on the needs of homeless people; needs that extend way beyond the need to be respected in one’s difference from others or to exercise one’s individual autonomy.

3. The Care Approach to Homelessness

Key to Nel Noddings’s care approach to homelessness is that the focus is on the *needs* of those living on our streets instead of on their *right* to live and sleep there.⁴⁵ She defends a demanding program of care that expresses a lively and justified resentment about the fact that there are co-citizens that have no place to go to except to homeless shelters that are often unsafe, dirty and that offer a temporary, overnight accommodation instead of a private home.⁴⁶ According to Noddings, to not have a place that one can call one’s home is a violation of fundamental human needs and hence unacceptable. As she puts it: “The homeless need homes, not halfway measures that actually contribute to their continued homelessness.”⁴⁷

First of all, there are practical reasons why people need a home. People need an address in order to be able to “register to vote, give appropriate information on medical forms, receive the benefits to which they are entitled.”⁴⁸ And people need protection against the elements, against danger, a place to store one’s possessions, etc. But even if we would find ways around these practical issues, there are more fundamental needs at stake. There is a relationship between having an address, or rather having a home, a private place to live and dwell, and developing a sense of dignity and self-respect.⁴⁹ Not being able to answer the question “Where do you live?” is accompanied by embarrassment, apology and humiliation. To be without an address is to live like an animal, to be reduced to one’s biological embodiment. Part of one’s identity is having a place one has made one’s own and that offers stability and a sense of security.⁵⁰ The way I understand myself in a practical evaluative sense is related to the place where I live, the place that I have invested my time and my resources in, a place that offers a sense of intimacy and privacy, a place to receive visitors. Given these needs, Noddings argues that having a home should be construed as a *right*.⁵¹

The kind of arrangements that can provide for these needs are probably multiple types. Noddings gives an example:

One can envision a building appointed for single men or women: small private bedrooms, a common dining hall, bathrooms conveniently located for each small block of bedrooms, a library/information center staffed by volunteers or by residents who have already acquired the requisite knowledge. No one would be forced to move out, but strong incentives would be provided for "moving on." Everyone would do some kind of work to maintain the community. Some might work outside and pay a small rent until they could move into a situation more nearly self-supporting. Small apartments would also be provided for families, and childcare would also be available.⁵²

Noddings does not shy away from certain forms of coercion. In fact she proposes three types of, what she considers, legitimate coercion:

1. First of all, we should coerce homeless persons to make use of such housing options: "a caring community is justified in saying, "You may not live on the streets."⁵³
2. Secondly, inhabitants (to the extent of their abilities) should work, either inside the home or via the job market in order to contribute and accept reciprocity.
3. The third level of coercion is needed when we are dealing with homeless psychiatric patients. About one third of homeless adults suffer from a serious psychiatric illness, including schizophrenia and affective, personality, and character disorders.⁵⁴ Mental illness is the third largest cause of homelessness for single adults.⁵⁵ Given facts like these, Noddings argues that it is justified to coerce the severely mentally ill homeless into accepting some kind of treatment for their illness.⁵⁶

To put these types of coercion into perspective: she argues that they should always be accompanied by a respect for the point of view and the arguments of the cared-for. We do not have to simply choose care over respect, but to *combine* the two by keeping care relations interactive and to remain open for negotiation.⁵⁷

I believe that the care-perspective to homelessness is, generally speaking, the most morally appropriate. Care simply is the most relevant moral outlook regarding those in society that are deeply dependent on others for meeting their basic needs.⁵⁸ That does not imply a rejection of liberal autonomy or, as some argue,⁵⁹ that care is more fundamental generally than liberal justice. It

is however more fundamental when a subclass of citizens is concerned that for some reason are trapped in a situation of dependency, need and suffering. The point is to extend the liberal focus on autonomy with a care perspective in the case of co-citizens who are dependent and cannot be considered sufficiently autonomous.

There are, I believe, different arguments for the moral relevance of care in the situation of homelessness. First, it makes sense to apply the moral logic of care given the fact that what homeless people need most is attention to their basic needs and well-being. One of those basic needs, of course, is a home. To instrumentalize this need in terms of a “precondition” or “resource” for “autonomy” is possible if one insists on a monistic liberal approach, but it seems to miss the inherent value and meaning a home has for a person. Furthermore, the focus on “needs” rather than on “agency” allows in principle for qualified types of coercion that might be warranted or even called for. Sometimes homeless individuals take decisions that not only perpetuate their inhuman condition but that are life threatening in a rather acute way, for instance, when they refuse to go to warm accommodation during periods of extreme cold.⁶⁰ In this example, an intervention seems clearly called for, especially given the fact that many homeless suffer from psychiatric conditions. However, I believe that Noddings does not succeed in justifying, or sufficiently qualifying, her three levels of coercion. I will get back to this in the next section, where I discuss some of the major challenges the care approach to homelessness faces.

A second element that characterizes care is attentiveness to the particular situation of a concrete individual.⁶¹ The fact that every human situation is unique by virtue of differences in the participants implies that the objective of care, the appropriate response to specific needs, “shifts with the situation.”⁶² Instead of an impartial focus on our common humanity, the so-called generalized other characterized by rationality and reason, and instead of “group difference” or shared “identity,” care is oriented towards the individual characteristics of a concrete context of care. Care ethics is characterized by receptivity to a particular set of needs and a specific affective-emotional constitution that can only be properly understood and responded to in the light of a person’s relational identity and history.⁶³ And although care *policy* by definition is general, it needs to be instrumental in establishing the conditions (practices, institutions) under which caring for *particular* individuals with concrete needs can take place. To be able to speak of a “politics of care” we need to make this basic distinction between on the one hand the face-to-face meeting of particular needs of the cared-for—what Noddings refers to as “caring-for” and Tronto as “care-giving”—and on the other the institutional conditions that allow the necessary care work to take place.⁶⁴

Yet attentiveness and responsiveness to the *individuality* of the other is crucial given the fact that “the homeless” is a category that contains many different people with very different stories and backgrounds often in need of specialized, particular attention. In fact, the population of the homeless is *so* diverse, and routes to homelessness *so* different, that they seem to defy any categorization at all.⁶⁵ For instance, a person that has lost his job, family support and eventually his house as a result of substance abuse needs more than just a roof above his head. He needs different types of support that address a range of needs.⁶⁶ But someone who is homeless as a result of being discharged from prison without any savings or support creates another set of challenges. Homeless with severe psychiatric conditions need yet another approach based on specialized treatment and care.⁶⁷ It makes no sense to apply the idea of “distributive justice” here, by mechanically and bureaucratically supplying citizens with certain goods that they have a “right” to based on their “contribution” to a scheme of social cooperation, often perversely tied to the one thing the homeless do not have, namely, a private address. In fact, a major reason why the problem of homelessness is distinctive and unfit for a general theory of social rights is this sheer diversity of individuals with their particular problems, needs and chaotic living conditions.

A third characteristic that is significant here is that care, according to most theorists of care, takes relationships to be key to its provision.⁶⁸ Of course, care in the family situation is by definition constituted by a web of relationships characterized by emotional ties that make it possible to respond appropriately to certain expressed needs and feelings.⁶⁹ The homeless are not always solitary—homeless families are part of the group of homeless—but often the homeless are socially isolated, either as a family or as a solitary person.⁷⁰ In fact, an essential part of the psychological trauma of becoming homeless is that it typically is accompanied by a rapid disintegration of social networks.⁷¹

The care perspective needs to somehow establish the beginning of a new, reliable, caring social network. Care ethics has been criticized by liberal thinkers, such as Will Kymlicka, for depending on such a network and hence unable to offer care to those who are not yet part of a web of caring relationships characterized by affective involvement.⁷² However, care can also refer to the attempt to establish or re-establish the beginning of such a network, especially if we are not dealing with “distant strangers” but with people that are at least spatially close. As McNaughton argues on the basis of twenty-eight biographical case studies, the transition out of homelessness can only really take place by reconnecting with positive social networks. And it is this transition in which support workers can play a mediating role.⁷³

In many cases, the help that is provided for by professional care cannot directly bring significant others into the life of the homeless. But the point of this professional relation is to bring the homeless, step by step, back into a social world. So what needs to be achieved in helping the homeless is to re-establish a positive social network and to realize care within such a network, most minimally by providing the homeless with a sense that someone is there for them. Furthermore, community housing like in the Noddings example, where privacy is combined with community, could be part of this approach. Mediation with family members can be helpful as well, provided that it is expected to contribute to a *positive* network for the person involved.

To the extent that “professionalism” is referring to objectivity and formal role playing by care workers, a certain amount of “deprofessionalism” might be necessary to provide for the needed informal and accommodating atmosphere.⁷⁴ This will, amongst others, require specialized training for those professional caretakers that establish the first-contacts and that try to win the confidence of the homeless. Homeless people are often—*excusez le mot*—un-appetizing and off-putting: they do not have washing machines, periodic dental care, or a closet with clean clothes. They often suffer from skin conditions and other medical problems due to living on the streets for an extended period of time. Hence it will be demanding not simply to perceive someone as an obscene presence or passive object of medical attention, but instead, to act non-stigmatizing and in a way that is responsive to particular needs. A certain level of *personal* involvement seems necessary for this. Liberal impartiality and neutrality are inappropriate here: what we need is a sense of concern and sympathetic engagement with the individual as a person and his or her condition and background.

4. Care and Homelessness: Challenges and Opportunities

There is one central concern that needs to be addressed, a concern that pops up again and again in the literature, namely, that care, help, therapy and so on in the case of homelessness are really normalizing attempts to assimilate the “other” to what is considered to be standards of appropriate behavior and living. Michel Foucault is looming large here.⁷⁵ And not only is the care approach a kind of illegitimate exercise of unilateral and irreversible power in the name of the normal and the sane, but also does the attempt to provide the homeless with homes and not allow them to live on the streets lead to a kind of “legal limbo,” given that these ideals are doomed to fail leaving the homeless in effect nowhere to go.⁷⁶ These are serious charges that should be taken seriously.

A first thing to notice when we evaluate these complaints is that the criticized care approach is often way less ambitious than the one we have discussed. The point is not simply to “shelter” the homeless and keep them “alive with a bed, a blanket and some soup,”⁷⁷ but to work towards the provision of housing that offers a permanent, safe and secure home including the necessary care and support. Secondly, Foucault’s work has its merits as a critique of power asymmetries that are unilateral and fixed, the panopticon being the prime example.⁷⁸ The care approach cannot, however, simply be identified with such irreversible and reifying power relations. Noddings for example repeatedly emphasizes the importance of taking the viewpoint of the cared-for seriously as well as trying to address their concerns. To simply reject care as an illegitimate attempt to assimilate the “other to the same,” to construe it by definition as a type of normalization that is insufficiently sensitive to the subjectivity of the cared-for, is not only a terribly stereotypical interpretation of care, it also seems to be based on the wrongheaded premise that care excludes respect. It seems to be based on the idea that either one recognizes the equal moral status and moral accountability of the homeless, or one engages in a politics of care that construes the homeless as passive, helpless, pathological victims.

Care for needs and respect for autonomy are not mutually exclusive principles: in fact, care ought to be accompanied by respect and should aim at a recovery of a certain threshold of competence in being self-governing. Yet tensions between these principles can arise, for instance, when someone’s own vision of her good is overruled in the name of care for what other people think are her “real needs.” Hence, what should be central to the principles that govern the way we organize our political and social institutions in general, other things being equal, is the importance of the ability to live one’s life according to one’s *own* ideas of the good and to have the freedom to re-evaluate these ideas.⁷⁹ Individuals *vary* considerably regarding their ideas of what makes a life meaningful and they themselves are almost always better positioned to know what it is that adds value to their own lives.⁸⁰ This moral vision is best expressed in liberal theory and liberal practice and is backed up by publicly recognized rights and entitlements that are well entrenched in most liberal-democratic societies. That is why I’m not arguing for a politics of care *tout court*, but for a *focused* care politics, namely, for those in society, like the homeless, that are dependent and in great need, either temporarily⁸¹ or more systematically.

We should acknowledge, however, that the care approach even in this specific interpretation is vulnerable to being exploited on three levels. The *first* way it could be misused is by political actors that only pay lip service to “compassion” and “care” for the plight of the homeless, while exclusively engaging in a politics of displacement and criminalization. Hence, to put this

risk in a formula: coercion yes, care no. This would simply chase the homeless from one neighborhood to the next and force them into warehouse-like shelters even though these are often in short supply.⁸²

A *second* type of possible misuse comes from the subjects of care themselves. Why would someone who is offered cheap accommodation in the housing project as well as food and services for their personal problems, eventually, feel the need to “move on”? Perhaps this life is too easy to be motivated to become self-supporting again. This is a well-known complaint concerning the provisions of the welfare state in general: don’t these provisions make people dependent and passive instead of providing sufficient incentives to become independent, contributing citizens again, thereby regaining a sense of self-esteem?

The *third* risk of misuse is tied to the three levels of coercion that Noddings argues for as part of the care approach to homelessness, namely: (1) not allowing homeless dwelling, (2) forcing inhabitants of supportive housing to work and contribute, and (3) forcing medical treatment on psychiatric patients. Perhaps some care workers and institutions offer care without respect, leaving the homeless at the receiving end of a whole panopticon of therapeutic power. Care can deteriorate into a practice of forcefully taking “beggars” from the streets and putting them into “care institutions” that operate on the basis of unchecked and arbitrary use of power, so vividly and disturbingly embodied by nurse Ratched in the famous book and film *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*.

Concerning the *first* type of misuse: it would be cynical to argue against the ambitious care approach to homelessness by claiming that authorities might take advantage of the system. You would be saying to the homeless: “I cannot do more for you than allow you to live on the streets, for there are some bad politicians out there who might take advantage of our ideals to make your life better.” We should first of all raise the logic of care for the homeless to the level of national legislation and, second, we should hold public authorities accountable who refuse to abide by the law, as we do in other cases where public rules and regulations are violated.

These rules, however, should be democratically supported. So a public and political debate is needed in order to convince the public of the inhuman condition of the homeless and that the care approach offers a better life. This, however, could be quite a challenge given how dominant liberal culture is with its stress on the importance of self-reliance and personal accountability, particularly in countries like the United States where a more classical liberalism is still hegemonic. But for those citizens or officials who are not convinced by the moral argument of care for the homeless, one could present two cost-benefit arguments in favor of the care model.

First, this approach would ultimately put an end to the homeless sleeping, begging and urinating on the streets that now takes place, often in socially dense areas such as downtown shopping streets and city parks. The homeless undeniably cause a certain level of inconvenience to the wider public.

Secondly, liberal thinkers sometimes worry that “providing a home by the state is an economic burden,”⁸³ but in fact the costs of homelessness are much higher. Recently the Canadian Homelessness Research Network estimated the annual costs of homelessness to the Canadian economy to be a whopping 7.05 billion Canadian dollars. As the authors say: “Homelessness is expensive because we cycle people through expensive public systems and increasingly costly and uncoordinated emergency services systems.” A focus on permanent solutions provides “the opportunity to reduce the long-term cost of homelessness and make more efficient and effective use of public resources.”⁸⁴ Hence for those who worry about the feasibility of a generous provision of housing for the homeless, we may take the success of the recent “housing first approach” as an indication that liberal governments are sensitive to this cost-effectiveness. Housing first provides immediate access to permanent and secure housing with no housing readiness requirements and offers a system of support and care. This new approach to homelessness is increasingly practiced both in Europe, the United States and Canada, and is considered a paradigm shift from the traditional staircase type service model, where homeless people would go through step-by-step progression of services that included treatment and that ended with permanent housing if and only if the “clients” would meet the requirements of the different steps of the program. Housing first has proved to be much more successful in preventing people from becoming homeless again.⁸⁵

How to assess the *second* hazard, namely, regarding homeless individuals passively giving themselves over to a temptingly comfortable way of life in the supportive home? Noddings herself seems aware of this risk, although it is not very prominently addressed. Firstly, she does argue in favor of types of “work fare” in order to regain a sense of self-respect and to instill a sense of reciprocity as well as to make life in the supportive housing situation not a kind of holiday resort.⁸⁶ Secondly, people under care are never “forced to move out, but strong incentives would be provided for ‘moving on.’”⁸⁷ What these “strong incentives” could be, however, remains utterly unclear.

In the case that residents have become self-sufficient again,⁸⁸ the heavily subsidized living conditions of supportive housing have become unnecessary and could instill a state of dependency, which is always a risk of caring.⁸⁹ Even the regular homeless shelter system, according to some homelessness experts, attracts “poor people who wouldn’t otherwise be homeless . . . as a way of quickly tapping into government assistance.”⁹⁰ Hence, systems of

review and control need to be in place in order to establish if a person is able to “move on.” And if so, there should be certain incentives in place that “encourage” someone to do so, for instance, by losing certain privileges. Checks should be institutionalized that guarantee that care is always oriented towards a recovery, or at least an optimization of independence and individual accountability. That is the true meaning of a care approach that takes respect seriously. But at the same time it is no more than realistic to admit that any system of care is liable to misuse by free riders. That is a kind of collateral damage that is better to account for, however, than the collateral damage that is inflicted upon a substantial number of our co-citizens, namely, those living on the streets, as a result of a rage to reduce our plural moral universe to one and one value only: personal autonomy and individual responsibility.

The *third* kind of misuse that the care-approach is liable to is power abuse, given that care sometimes calls for coercive interventions. Noddings’s three levels of coercion could at each stage be abused: (ad. 1) taking people off the streets against their will could easily degenerate into a kind of Rudi Giuliani, zero-tolerance street sweeps and practices like the burning of possessions of the homeless; (ad. 2) forcing people to work, inside or outside the home, runs the risk of adding insult to injury in those cases where that type of activity cannot be expected; (ad. 3) finally, coercing people into treatment of mental illnesses in their “best interests” could derail into practices of forcefully administering mind altering drugs (or perhaps even brain surgery) in order to create the desired “docile bodies.”

A general answer to these risks is that the review systems I have referred to above, should not just check to what extent *consumers* take advantage of care, but they should also cover the *care takers* and their practices in order to avoid power misuse. But even with boards of review in place, the third kind of coercion remains unacceptable given the potentially far reaching nature of the intervention. To engage in treatment of mental conditions without cooperation of the person involved is prone to violations of basic respect for the physical and psychological integrity of the person, even if we assume that such forced treatment of psychiatric patients can ever be effective. Such coercion can only be justified if there is an acute risk of serious harm to self or others. Being homeless could qualify as “causing harm” to the self, however, given the risks forced psychiatric treatment brings—power abuse, therapeutic ignorance, and insufficient controls and review systems for those who want to normalize instead of cure—the case Noddings makes to justify coercion here utterly fails. That does not mean that caretakers, psychiatrists and therapists should not *try* to convince the mentally ill concerning diagnosis and appropriate medical response, but if persuasion fails coercion is not acceptable.

Concerning the first kind of coercion: although the current and quite successful “housing first” approach is very much in line with a care philosophy, there is one important difference and that is the central place of “consumer choice” within the housing first model.⁹¹ The logic of care allows for certain forms of coercion if need be, most importantly regarding the “choice” to live on the street. Another paper would be required to access carefully how this type of paternalistic coercion should be qualified, legitimized and limited.⁹² Noddings’s version of paternalism is rather crude. Very generally, some qualifications are important in this regard. Firstly, if the homelessness in case is really of the voluntary type that we have discussed earlier, small as this group may be, forced intervention is hard to legitimize for the reason that this would amount to a violation of the liberal principle of self-determination. In most cases, however, homelessness is not voluntary and if the housing alternatives meet certain basic interests such as privacy and self-respect, most homeless will gladly accept these. Secondly, paternalistic intervention against expressed wishes of someone to remain on the street seems particularly justified if the homeless person is a psychiatric patient who is severely estranged from his or her own powers of reason and judgment, for instance, in the case of severe schizophrenia or a major depression. Mental incapacitation is typically seen as a good reason to act on behalf of someone for her own good when basic interests are at stake—what Feinberg refers to as soft paternalism.⁹³ Such policies of coercion should however remain *firmly within a care perspective* instead of a criminal justice or policing perspective that prosecutes and punishes. Thirdly, the care offered should always remain dialogic and open to negotiation, instead of becoming a self-righteous construal of the homeless as passive objects of care. This could for example mean that housing the homeless ought to take preferred locations of the homeless into account, although these preferences have to be balanced against financial and organizational feasibility.

5. Conclusion

If a homeless person asks you for a bit of change, so the joke goes, you should answer: “change comes from within.” That, of course, is not the change a homeless person refers to. But let us suppose that the homeless living on the streets of our cities *do* in fact ask for change in that other, more profound sense. Let us suppose that they do ask for more than a bit of money, some legal and social tolerance and public toilets. Given the condition they are in it seems wrongheaded to suppose that all they need is a bit of will power.

The liberal idea that autonomy is the beginning and the end of our moral concerns runs the risk of leaving the homeless where they are, either because

it suggests that they are there on a voluntary basis or because they deserve to suffer the consequences of their own irresponsible behavior. To conceive of the condition of homelessness in terms of a type of difference that we have to respect and accommodate, is missing the point of their condition as well. Homelessness is not a part of the urban landscape that needs to be recognized on a par with ethno-cultural difference in the name of a respect for diversity and pluralism. It is good and well to argue for a wide range of acceptable social diversity, but some types of difference fall outside of the range.

Housing should be considered a right and a caring society has a duty to keep its citizens from living on the streets, especially if we are dealing with countries that have the ability to do so given their existing levels of affluence. This means first and foremost making available the required resources to house the homeless in ways that meet their basic interests. Furthermore, an affluent society should not just deal with the homeless that live on the streets already but also invest in the long-term *prevention* of new cases of homelessness occurring. Here the availability of affordable housing ought to figure prominently. Although it will never be able on its own to eradicate homelessness, for the reason that this is a multi-causal problem with both a host of structural as well as possible individual triggers, most theorists agree that affordable housing is key to prevention.⁹⁴ Affordability is a function both of income and housing costs and so both dimensions should be taken into account. On the income side we can think of measures like sufficient minimum wage, robust systems of social security, reducing taxes for those at the bottom of the income distribution, while on the housing side we can think of policies like rent control and social housing, protecting single room occupancy housing and laws that require developers to build affordable housing whenever they are granted rights to build luxury or commercial facilities.⁹⁵ These types of policies and measures are basically part and parcel of the way essential goods are fairly distributed across all members of a society, in which issues of fairness and solidarity play a key role. I do not think that care-ethics has anything special to offer here as these questions can be dealt with effectively from the point of view of a theory and politics of social justice that is universal in scope instead of focused on individual needs and situations of extreme dependency.

Important as these measures may be, the limitation of long-term structural prevention is that it does nothing to alleviate the suffering of those individuals and families living on our streets *here and now*. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that homelessness can be eradicated by structural measures only. This article has focused on the homeless individuals and families themselves not because prevention is unimportant but because there are people out there that need attention, care and recourse right now. And to have a home is not

something that should be made conditional on sanity, sobriety, money, or cooperation with treatment and therapy. Nor should people be allowed to fall to a level of “bare life” on the basis of imprudent and unwise decisions in the past. Nobody deserves to live in the streets and public parks or sleep in emergency shelters. Change sometimes does not come from “within” and so the plight of the homeless calls for practices, attitudes and institutions that offer help and care. If there really is a risk involved here in terms of the possibilities of misuse that we have discussed, this is a risk worth taking.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank Michael Merry and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful and constructive comments and suggestions.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. A recent report from the European Commission speaks of a worsening of the problem of homelessness in the European Union since 2008: “As the ongoing financial and economic crisis puts more people out of a job and makes more people dependent on social protection, the risk of homelessness in all Member States of the European Union is increasing”. The estimate for the EU is that 4.1 million people are homeless each year for a shorter or longer period (EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness in the European Union* [Brussels: European Commission, 2013], 2, 6). For the United States this number ranges from 2.5 million to 3.5 million (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, “Homelessness in America: Overview of Data and Causes,” 2015, https://www.nlchp.org/documents/Homeless_Stats_Fact_Sheet) and for Canada 200,000 (Stephen Gaetz et al., *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013* [Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press, 2013]). Although there is considerable debate about the definition of homelessness, homelessness generally describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing (cf. Gaetz et al., *State of Homelessness*, 4; EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*, 4). This definition does not only cover sleeping rough, but also temporary shelter like emergency shelter, sleeping in a car or staying with friends.

2. Jennie Gunn, G. Rikabi, and C. G. Huebner, "Do You See Me? Ethical Considerations of the Homeless," *Online Journal of Health Ethics* 9, no. 1 (2013), <http://aquila.usm.edu/ojhe/vol9/iss1/4>.
3. Keith Burkum, "Homelessness, Virtue Theory, and the Creation of Community," in *The Ethics of Homelessness*, ed. J. Abbarno (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 79.
4. Leonard Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter* (London: Cornell University Press, 2004), 92.
5. Kathleen Arnold, *Homelessness, Citizenship and Identity* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2004).
6. Arnold, *Homelessness*; Arnold, "Homelessness and Drag," in *Professional Lives, Personal Struggles*, ed. T. Valado and R. Amster (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2012), 37-46; 2012; Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*; Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City* (New York: Guilford, 2003); Andrew Smith, "In Defense of Homelessness," *Journal of Value Inquiry* 48, no. 33 (2014): 33-51; Anita Superson, "The Homeless and the Right to 'Public Dwelling,'" in *The Ethics of Homelessness*, ed. J. Abbarno (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 141-52.
7. Superson, "The Homeless," 149; cf. Mitchell, *The Right to the City*, 9.
8. Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 103 ff.
9. Smith, "In Defense of Homelessness," 42, 47.
10. Arnold, *Homelessness*, 161, 16.
11. *Ibid.*, 8, chap. 5.
12. Smith, "In Defense of Homelessness," 34.
13. *Ibid.*, 43, 49.
14. Bart van Leeuwen, "A Formal Recognition of Social Attachments," *Inquiry* 50, no. 2 (2007): 180-205. Feldman argues that his move towards a "pluralized citizenship" is distinct from identity politics (Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 21, 85), yet he fails to make clear in what way. He argues that besides recognition the homeless also need redistribution and political agency, but this is the case for minority identities as well (Nancy Fraser, "Social Justice in an Age of Identity Politics," in *Redistribution or Recognition?*, ed. N. Fraser and A. Honneth [London: Verso, 2003], 7-109). Moreover, recognition of difference remains part of his approach, like the other theorists I refer to. Recognition here *is* focused on a broadening of the scope of acceptable diversity by arguing that the homeless should be accommodated in the public spaces of the modern city. His "pluralizing movement" (85, 109) includes a wider range of affordable housing as well. Although lack of affordable housing is one of the structural causes of homelessness, the question remains how to deal with the homeless *here and now*.
15. Susan Hutson, "The Experience of 'Homeless,'" in *Homelessness*, ed. S. Hutson and D. Clapham (London: Cassell, 1999), 208-25; Roch Hurtubise et al., "Shelters for the Homeless," in *Finding Home*, ed. J. Hulchanski et al. (Toronto: Cities Centre, University of Toronto, 2009), chap. 1.2, www.homelesshub.ca/FindingHome; Gaetz et al., *State of Homelessness*, 22.
16. Jonathan May, "Homelessness," in *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, ed. R. Kitchin and N. Thrift (London: Elsevier, 2009), 186, 185-90.

17. Gerald Daly, "Housing and Homelessness," in *The Sage Companion to the City*, ed. T. Hall et al. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008), 275, 267–81; James O'Connell, "Raging against the Night: Dying Homeless and Alone," *The Journal of Clinical Ethics* 16, no. 3 (2005): 262–66.
18. EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*, 5.
19. Madeleine Stoner, "Interventions and Policies to Serve Homeless People Infected by HIV and AIDS," *Journal of Health and Social Policy* 7, no. 1 (1995): 53–68.
20. Lisa A. Goodman, Leonard Saxe, and Mary Harvey, "Homelessness as Psychological Trauma," *American Psychologist* 46, no. 11 (1991): 1219–25.
21. EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*, 5.
22. Rainer Forst, "Toleration," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, 2012, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/toleration/>.
23. Irene Glasser and Rae Bridgman, *Braving the Street* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1999).
24. Megan Ravenhill, *The Culture of Homelessness* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 12.
25. Remote places in the American West for instance, continue to attract folks who wish to live "off the grid" and isolated, far away from civilization. Many voluntarily live without running water or electricity, and subsist on the absolute minimum.
26. Cf. Kim Hopper, *Reckoning with Homelessness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).
27. Gaetz et al., *State of Homelessness*, 12; Ravenhill, *Culture of Homelessness*, 224.
28. Jeremy Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom," in *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ed. R. Goodin and Ph. Pettit (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 432–48.
29. Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom," 436.
30. *Ibid.*, 435, 440.
31. *Ibid.*, 436 ff.
32. *Ibid.*, 435.
33. *Ibid.*, 435.
34. *Ibid.*, 443.
35. *Ibid.*, 440.
36. *Ibid.*, 445; cf. 436.
37. *Ibid.*, 434–435.
38. Vin Lyon-Callo, "Do We Really Need More Research on Homelessness?," in *Professional Lives, Personal Struggles*, ed. T. Valado and R. Amster (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2012), 129, 119–30; Peter Marcuse, "Neutralizing Homelessness," *Socialist Review* 88, no. 1 (1988): 69–97.
39. David Schrader, "Home Is Where the Heart Is," in *The Ethics of Homelessness*, ed. J. Abbarno (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 63, 63–78.
40. *Ibid.*, 66–67.
41. Shyli Karin-Frank, "Homelessness, the Right to Privacy and the Obligation to Provide a Home," in *The Ethics of Homelessness*, ed. J. Abbarno (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 199–214.

42. Ibid., 203.
43. Nicholas Pleace, *Effective Services for Substance Misuse and Homelessness in Scotland* (Scottish Government Social Research, 2008), www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch; Carol McNaughton, *Transitions through Homelessness* (New York: Palgrave, 2008); Bridget Franklin, "More Than Community Care," in *Homelessness*, ed. S. Hutson and D. Clapham (London: Continuum, 1999), 191–207.
44. Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 59–69.
45. Nel Noddings, "Caring, Social Policy, and Homelessness," *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 23, no. 6 (2002): 441–54; Nel Noddings, *Starting at Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), chap. 12.
46. Superson, "The Homeless," 146–47; EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*, 20.
47. Noddings, "Caring, Social Policy," 445.
48. Ibid., 445.
49. Ibid., 446.
50. Ibid.; cf. McNaughton, *Transitions*, chap. 6.
51. Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 264. Noddings does not reject the concept of a right, but offers a need-based account: a right is a publicly recognized need (ibid., 54 ff.).
52. Noddings, "Caring, Social Policy," 446–47.
53. Ibid., 447; Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 136.
54. Mark Holter and Carol Mowbray, "Mental Health Systems," in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. D. Levinson (London: Sage, 2004), 376.
55. NCH Report, *Mental Illness and Homelessness* (Washington, 2009), www.nationalhomeless.org.
56. Noddings, "Caring, Social Policy," 450.
57. Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 136–37, 202.
58. Cf. Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 418–20.
59. Virginia Held, "The Meshing of Care and Justice," *Hypatia* 10, no. 2 (1995): 128–32.
60. EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*, 21.
61. Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 127–31.
62. Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 20.
63. Seyla Benhabib, "The Generalized and the Concrete Other," in *Feminism as Critique*, ed. S. Benhabib and D. Cornell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 87.
64. Noddings, *Starting at Home*, 20–24; Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 106–7, chap. 6.
65. Hopper, *Reckoning with Homelessness*, 84; McNaughton, *Transitions*.
66. Pleace, *Effective Services*, chaps. 2 and 3.
67. Sam Tsemberis, "Housing First," in *How to House the Homeless?*, ed. I. Ellen and B. O'Flaherty (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 2010), 37–56.
68. Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 46–50; Judith Phillips, *Care* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), chap. 4; Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, 405 ff.

69. Noddings, *Starting at Home*.
70. Arnold, *Homelessness*, 60–61; O'Connell, "Raging against the Night."
71. Goodman et al., "Homelessness as Psychological Trauma."
72. Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, 405–6.
73. McNaughton, *Transitions*, 156; cf. Franklin, "More Than Community Care," 201.
74. For an example of such a committed and engaged care relation with homeless youths, and at the same time proof of how difficult this actually is to accomplish, see the impressive care work by Paul Moulds, Director of The Oasis Youth Support Network in Surry Hills, Australia, in the documentary *The Oasis* (2008). Cf. Irene Glasser, "Soup Kitchens," in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. D. Levinson (London: Sage, 2004), 526.
75. Arnold, *Homelessness*, chap. 4; Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 46, 47, 92.
76. Arnold, *Homelessness*, 109; cf. Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 42.
77. Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, 92.
78. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London: Penguin, 1977), chap. 3.
79. Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
80. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, [1859] 1978).
81. All people are dependent at least during certain stages of their lives, and so care practices and care institutions are in that sense relevant for all members of society.
82. Arnold, *Homelessness*, 111; Mitchell, *The Right to the City*, 196.
83. Karin-Frank, "Homelessness, the Right to Privacy," 211; cf. Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom," 436.
84. Gaetz et al., *State of Homelessness*, 8; Stephen Gaetz, *The Real Cost of Homelessness* (Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press, 2012); NCH Report, *Homes not Handcuffs* (Washington, 2009), 19 ff, www.nationalhomeless.org; Tsemberis, "Housing First"; Dennis Culhane, "The Costs of Homelessness," *European Journal of Homelessness* 2 (2008): 97–114.
85. Sam Tsemberis and Ronda Eisenberg, "Pathways to Housing," *Psychiatric Services* 51, no. 4 (2000): 487–93; Sam Tsemberis et al., "Housing First, Consumer Choice, and Harm Reduction for Homeless Individuals with a Dual Diagnosis," *American Journal of Public Health* 84, no. 4 (2004): 651–56; Pleace, *Effective Services*; Gaetz et al., *State of Homelessness*, 2013.
86. Noddings, "Caring, Social Policy," 447.
87. *Ibid.*, 446.
88. Notice that, in some cases, service interventions and housing support may need to go on for some time or even permanently (permanent supportive housing).
89. Cf. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 146.
90. Joel Stein, "The Real Face of Homelessness," *Time* 161, no. 3 (2003), <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,407358-3,00.html>.
91. Tsemberis et al., "Housing First."
92. Together with Michael Merry, I have recently presented a conference paper on this very subject. Bart van Leeuwen and Michael Merry, "Should the Homeless

- Be Forcibly Helped?," paper presented at the conference Ethics and Social Welfare in Hard Times, London, 2016.
93. Joel Feinberg, *Harm to Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
 94. David Levinson and Marcy Ross (ed.), *Homelessness Handbook* (Great Barrington: Berkshire Publishing Group, 2007); EC Report, *Confronting Homelessness*; Feldman, *Citizens without Shelter*, chap. 4; Daly, "Housing and Homelessness."
 95. Marybeth Shinn, "Prevention Approaches," in *Homelessness Handbook*, ed. D. Levinson and M. Ross (Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire, 2007), 291–99; Brett Williams, "Gentrification," in Levinson and Ross, eds., *Homelessness Handbook*, 266–70; Glasser and Bridgman, *Braving the Street*, 108 ff.

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